COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
November 18, 2005

Minutes

Present: Richard Brown, Patrick Tresco, Marilyn Davies, Michael Kay, Rick Rabbitt, Phil Smith, Larry Reaveley, Marc Bodson, G. B. Stringfellow (for Anil Virkar), Kent Udell, Martin Berzins, Milind Deo, Vicki Jensen

Excused: Anil Virkar, Chair, MSE
Sandy Bruhn, Executive Assistant to the Dean's Office – Engineering

ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES:

- The Executive Committee Holiday Luncheon will be held on December 16 at noon at the Alumni House.

- At the October Executive Committee meeting a draft of the College RPT Guidelines was discussed. Since that meeting Dean Brown and Sandy Bruhn have received very valuable feedback from Committee members and senior faculty members. Most of these suggestions will be incorporated in the next draft of the Guidelines, which we will strive to make consistent with University policy and easy to understand. Marc Bodson suggested that during the next review cycle of the Guidelines, that the Implementation Checklist from Susan Olson’s office (Associate VP for Academic Affairs), be referred to to make sure all points are addressed. The check list is found at www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/ppm-9-5-1-implementation-checklist.pdf. We will try to get this turned around so it can be discussed with faculty by the end of this semester.

- Dean Brown passed around a report that he e-mailed to the chairs. It is published by the National Academy of Engineering and titled Engineering Research and America’s Future. The report discusses the importance of engineering to our economy, standard of living, defense capability, etc. It makes bold recommendations of what should be done to avoid losing our technological edge. This is an important document that will be useful in discussions with our own state government. Marilyn Davies will send a copy to the College advisory boards; Dean Brown will send a copy to our faculty.

- Dean Brown reported on the following items which were discussed at recent CAD Meetings:
  
  - University alcohol policy. Dean Brown encouraged the chairs to review the policy with faculty before scheduling any events to make sure they are
in compliance, as the University is concerned about having any violations that could impact public relations.

- University agenda of priorities for presentation at the next legislative session. Items on the list include salary and benefits, operation and maintenance, fuel and power money, student success, improvement in graduation rates, and a new rec center. The engineering initiative, listed as number 6, was announced as being in the fifth of five years.

- There was some discussion about separating University salaries from other state employees’ salaries, but the prospects do not look good at this point.

- USTAR Initiative. This funding opportunity has captured the attention of many groups across the state, and most have had their say, increasing the document describing the program from 4 pages to 1,000 pages. An effort will be made to bring the University’s report and the state’s vision together so our proposal to the legislature will be clear.

- Sabbatical requests. Dean Brown commented that the College has only a fraction of the money or semesters needed to support all sabbatical requests received this year. He has been discussing this issue with Dave Pershing and Susan Olson. While sabbaticals are a privilege rather than an entitlement, they provide an opportunity for faculty to become better teachers and more productive researchers. At the latest CAD meeting, SVP Pershing said he would allow us to submit all College of Engineering sabbatical requests. These may not all be funded, but they will be considered. Faculty are limited to receiving 110% of their normal compensation while on sabbatical. If faculty take less sabbatical support from state sources, we will be able to support more sabbaticals. A typical support level for two-semester sabbaticals around the country is 50%.

- University-provided Cell Phones. The University telephone system is provided for the conduct of official business. After several months of exploring alternatives to the practice of centralized management of university–provided cell phones, The Office of Information Technology has written a new policy, which is now in effect. “A new option for business use of cellular phones will be for employees to purchase a cellular telephone and appropriate calling plan and receive additional monthly compensation toward these expenses. Using this option, no substantiation of business vs. personal usage is required, since the University is neither directly paying for the cellular phone itself nor the calling plan. This would be the preferred option for employees who must use cellular phones for their jobs.” University discounted programs are offered through Cingular, Verizon, Sprint, and T-Mobile. Information on department plans is available on NetCom’s website.
Department Update on Due Progress – Graduate Students
Dean Brown commented that every department needs a process that encourages graduate students (and their advisors) to keep them moving toward a timely graduation. The chairs reported on procedures their departments have in place to monitor their students progress. Dean Brown recommended that the chairs discuss this issue with their faculty and create a formal process. Graduate students will benefit from meeting with their committee early in the process and continuing to have regular meetings until they have completed their plan of study.

Ethical Standards
A meeting was recently held to discuss the University’s ethical standards and code of conduct. Representatives from Accounting, HR, EHS, and general council addressed the issues. To access the Ethical Standards and Code of Conduct handbook go to http://www.hr.utah.edu/ethicalstandards and click on the link at the bottom of the page to download the PDF. “The handbook has been developed as a guide for all employees at the University of Utah to support us in our different stewardship roles. The Handbook is not intended to be exhaustive but to provide direction to appropriate resources to assist us in acting responsibly and doing the right things as we navigate our way through the many different and complex situations we encounter.”

Dean Brown recommended that the chairs present one topic from the handbook at each faculty meeting for discussion and training. An ethical standards presentation is now included in all new hire orientations. After the first of the year, auditors will visit various departments across campus to determine whether employees are aware of the U’s ethical standards and code of conduct. It will be important that everyone in the College is informed.

Patrick Tresco recommended that everyone read a book titled Academic Duty by Donald Kennedy, president of Stanford University.

Assessing the University’s Internal Controls
A sound internal control environment is essential. This is another matter to be discussed at faculty meetings. Michael Kay commented that a circular has been issued by the Division of Health and Human Services Inspector General regarding specific areas of concern:
1. Accurate reporting of level of effort
2. Direct charge of clerical and administrative salaries to grants
3. Cost transfers
4. Cost sharing

Michael will prepare a handout detailing the concerns and send to all members of the Committee.

Additional Compensation/Independent Contracting
Michael Kay reported on an incident within the College of a faculty member asking an exempt employee to do some extra work. Guidelines in the University Policy and
Procedures were not followed which created a delay in the payment for the employee’s
time. Additional compensation for overtime work has to be agreed on in advance and
approved at the supervisory level.

Common First Year
Dean Brown and Patrick Tresco attended the National Merit Finalists Banquet November
17. They talked to students who indicated an interest in engineering. The students and
most of their parents expressed a desire to have exposure to the breadth of opportunities
in engineering. At the last IAB meeting two members felt that having a survey of
engineering class would be beneficial for students. Dean Brown is supportive of a
common first year engineering course, which would be a survey of each department. The
second semester students could be enrolled in a track for a particular department. Some
departments already have an introductory course in place which has been very effective.
This type of program is an opportunity for us to recruit students who are coming into
engineering but not quite sure which discipline is right for them. It is also a tool for
retention. Dean Brown asked the chairs to discuss this matter with their faculty and we
will continue a discussion at a future Executive Committee Meeting.

Remodeling-College Involvement
Dean Brown requested that before any remodeling is done, that the chairs coordinate with
Michael Kay. We can save the departments’ money; make things run smoother and
eliminate any implications on other space.

MS/MBA Degree
Several months ago Dean Brown sent a note to faculty regarding interest in a MS/MBA
dual degree program. Feedback indicated a lot of interest in every department. Larry
Reaveley will send the chairs information on this program which will be discussed at a
future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00.